

very difficult bill that will go a long way toward solving many problems of this country.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DORGAN). Who seeks recognition?

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for a period not to exceed 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2002

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I hope that the Senate will soon begin consideration of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002. This bill would authorize \$343.5 billion for national defense programs, the full amount requested by the administration, including the \$18.4 billion requested by the President in his amended budget request.

The bill would also address a number of important priorities identified by the Armed Services Committee, adding significant funding for military compensation and quality of life, the readiness and transformation of the military services, and the capability of our armed forces to meet nontraditional threats, including terrorism. In light of recent events, we will obviously do more, as we already have, with the enactment of the \$40 billion emergency supplemental appropriation bill last week. However, these are no ordinary times, and the debate on this bill will be no ordinary debate. Debate on a bill like this is an inherent part of our democracy, and while our democratic institutions are stronger than any terrorist attack, in one regard we operate differently in times of national emergency. We strive to set aside our differences, and ask decent people everywhere to join forces with us to seek out and to defeat the common enemy of the civilized world.

For this reason, I am today introducing two new bills. The first bill is identical to S. 1416, as reported by the Senate Armed Services Committee in every respect but one—the removal of legislative language dealing with missile defense. The second bill, which would be deferred for debate at a later and more appropriate time, would include the missile defense language.

I strongly believe that the missile defense provisions took an appropriate step on an issue of national importance, and I was disappointed that this single area of disagreement led the Republican Members of our committee to vote against this bill that is so important to our national security.

In my view, however, this is the wrong time for divisive debate on issues of national defense. We cannot let issues like this pull us apart and undermine our common sense of national purpose in fighting terrorism. Rather, we should leave this debate to a later time and link arms against our attackers.

When we take up the defense authorization act, I hope that my colleagues will join me in putting controversial issues aside and help us move forward together to pass this bill promptly and indicate our strong and unified support for the national defense with a minimum of divisive debate.

THE HAPPY HOOLIGANS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I want to comment for a moment about some fighter pilots who are flying air missions over our nation's capital.

On Tuesday of last week, following the attack on the World Trade Center and shortly before the Pentagon was hit, a detachment of fighters who were on alert at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia were ordered airborne to protect the nation's capital. It happens that the detachment of fighters is from North Dakota.

The 119th Tactical Fighter Wing of the North Dakota Air National Guard flies F-16s. They are called the Happy Hooligans. The Happy Hooligans are folks who farm; they run drug stores; they teach school. They do a lot of things in their community, but they also are members of the National Guard who maintain and fly F-16s. More than that, the Happy Hooligans, the National Air Guard detachment in Fargo, ND, are some of the best fighter pilots in the world. In fact, the Happy Hooligans have won the William Tell Award on several occasions.

The William Tell Award is an award that is given to the fighter units that are the most proficient combat fighter pilots in the world.

So this National Guard unit from Fargo, ND, has taken their airplanes to the William Tell contest, and they have flown against the world's top combat pilots, and they have brought the William Tell Award home to Fargo, ND, as proof that they are the best fighter pilots in the world.

For some time, the Happy Hooligans have kept a permanent detachment with four F-16s, pilots, and crews on alert at Langley Air Force Base to provide air defense of the United States.

Last Tuesday morning, the attack on the World Trade Center in New York

precipitated an order for those fighters who were on alert to take to the skies. And those F-16s took to the air, but regrettably they were not yet over Washington's airspace when the airplane hit the Pentagon. They were still some minutes away.

But they then flew, as I understand it, 7 hours that day over the skies of Washington, DC, performing combat air patrol and protecting our nation's capital. And these are, as I said, men and women who belong to the National Guard but who have been awarded the distinction of being the best fighter pilots in the world.

I was enormously proud of them. I called their commander at Langley. I told them how proud I was to have the Happy Hooligans—a wonderful contingent of civilian soldiers; men and women who belong to the National Guard—flying those F-16s, providing air cover during a time of national emergency.

So, for the record, I want to say that all Americans, of course, are proud of our men and women in uniform. We grieve with them for the tragedy visited upon them when the airplane was flown into the Pentagon, just as we do for the thousands of people who have lost their lives at the World Trade Center.

And as there are brave men and women across the country who have stepped forward to say, let it be me—the firemen and the firefighters and police men and women who were climbing the stairs of the World Trade Center to try to rescue people, risking their lives to help others, just as there are so many heroes around this country during a time of need—so, too, were the Happy Hooligans in their cockpit of the F-16s, flying combat air patrols over our Nation's Capital.

Let me say to the Happy Hooligans: I salute you. I am proud of your work. And this country owes you a great debt of gratitude.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I say to my friend and colleague from North Dakota, in relation to his eloquent remarks about the Happy Hooligans, we are glad the Happy Hooligans are on our side. I knew that this training was going on. These Air Guardsmen—and possibly women as well—were very important in scrambling to protect our Nation's Capital. I know of one of those pilots actually who is from Virginia.

I am not going to get into the details because it is important for national security not to reveal what they were doing, but they were very much in harm's way. I will not get into any more detail other than to say, these pilots—the Happy Hooligans, and any others who were involved in that scrambled mission to protect our Nation's Capital, and the region here in the DC area—really were willing to give their lives in a generally undefended position.